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ABSTRACT

This monograph contains four papers based on a series of lectures delivered to graduate students and faculty at Northern Illinois University between 1976 and 1979. Robert Carlson examines European adult education, especially such issues as emphasis on job training over liberal education, the danger that adult education will become a method of indirect social restraint, and the problems posed by uncritical acceptance of the certification concept. James A. Farmer, Jr., focuses on the evaluation of broad-aimed programs of adult education, suggesting the use of "mixed scanning" as an effective tool for assigning priorities and selecting those components of a program which require careful review. Wesley C. Meierhenry discusses nontraditional education, touching on research on the student, subject matter, method of instruction, preferred location for study, and barriers to participation. Concluding this monograph, Harold Beder examines dissemination and utilization in adult basic education programs: he also presents findings on variables relating to users' innovativeness and their adoption of new practices. (CT)

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Information Series No. 172

PERSPECTIVES ON ADULT EDUCATION PRACTICE

edited by

John A. Niemi
Northern Illinois University

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education
The National Center for Research in Vocational Education
The Ohio State University
1960 Kenny Road
Columbus, Ohio 43210

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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FOREWORD

The Educational Resources Information Center on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education (ERIC/CE) is one of sixteen clearinghouses in a nationwide information system that is funded by the National Institute of Education. One of the functions of the Clearinghouse is to interpret the literature that is entered in the ERIC data base. This paper should be of particular interest to practitioners in the field as well as to teachers, researchers, and students in training at the graduate level.

The profession is indebted to John A. Niemi for his effort in the preparation of this paper. Recognition is due Gordon Darkenwald, Rutgers University; and Patricia Winkfield, the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, for their critical review of the manuscript prior to its final revision and publication. Robert D. Bhaerman, Assistant Director for Career Education and Dr. J. Nevin Robbins, Assistant Director for Adult Education at the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, coordinated the publication's development. Cathy Thompson assisted in the editing of the manuscript and Cathy Kendall and Millie Dunning typed the final draft.

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ABSTRACT

This monograph contains four papers based on a series of lectures delivered to graduate students and faculty at Northern Illinois University between 1976 and 1979. Robert Carlson examines European adult education, especially such issues as emphasis on job training over liberal education, the danger that adult education will become a method of indirect social restraint, and the problems posed by uncritical acceptance of the certification concept. James A. Farmer, Jr., focuses on the evaluation of broad-aimed programs of adult education, suggesting the use of "mixed scanning" as an effective tool for assigning priorities and selecting those components of a program which require careful review. Wesley C. Meierhenry discusses nontraditional education, touching on research on the student, subject matter, method of instruction, preferred location for study, and barriers to participation. Concluding this monograph, Harold Beder examines dissemination and utilization in adult basic education programs; he also presents findings on variables relating to users' innovativeness and their adoption of new practices. (CT)

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IDEN::*Europe; Mixed Scanning; *Nontraditional Education

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Northern Illinois University

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INTRODUCTION

The appeal of this paper is broad in that it ranges over issues related not only to practitioners but also to graduate students preparing for work in the field and to professors and researchers responsible for the improvement of practice. To these groups, this paper brings a number of challenging perspectives on topics that must be addressed by all serious adult educators.

The monograph contains four papers based on a series of lectures delivered to graduate students and faculty at Northern Illinois University between 1976 and 1979. As a contribution to the literature of adult education, it follows the format of an earlier monograph, *Adult Learning: Issues and Innovations*, edited by Robert M. Smith, Professor of Adult Education at NIU. Dr. Smith's paper, which contained articles by six well-known professors of adult education, atracted wide attention when it was published in 1976.

Robert Carlson takes a searching look at questions which he feels must be addressed. Although he bases his arguments on European practices, he makes it plain that the issues raised also confront adult educators in North America, e.g., emphasis on job training over liberal education, the danger that adult education will become a method of indirect social restraint, and the problems posed by uncritical acceptance of the certification concept.

James A. Farmer, Jr., focuses on the evaluation of broad-aimed programs of adult education, a topic that has attracted the attention of practitioners. In his scheme for distinguishing among different types of adult education, he conceives of broad-aimed adult education as "a type of problem-centered adult education which focuses mainly on community or societal problems." After explaining why those responsible for broad-aimed programs have paid little

attention in the past to evaluation, for the future he suggests the use of "mixed scanning" as an effective tool for assigning priorities and selecting those components of a program which require careful review.

Wesley C. Meierhenry discusses nontraditional education, a phenomenon so pervasive as to create in adult educators a new perspective on their profession. Research on the student, subject matter, method of instruction, preferred location for study, and barriers to participation are discussed within the framework of nontraditional education. Of special interest to practioners are studies on the success of graduates, cost effectiveness, accreditation, and forms of nontraditional education.

It is fitting that the final paper by Harold Beder emphasizes his conviction that knowledge emanating from research will have value only to the extent that it can be utilized by practitioners. Beder examines dissemination and utilization in ABE programs with reference to the Rogers and Shoemaker S-M-C-R model. In addition to studying dissemination from the perspective of the project developer, Beder presents interesting findings on variables relating to users' innovativeness and their adoption of new practices. He concludes with a discussion of the major problems affecting the dissemination-utilization process and how they could be overcome.

In conclusion, I wish to express deep appreciation to the authors who so willingly accepted the invitation extended by the NIU Graduate Colloquium Committee and the Adult and Continuing Program area within the Department of Leadership and Educational Policy Studies. Financial support for the lectures came from funds derived from graduate student fees. I also want to thank several colleagues for their encouragement of this effort: Dr. James T. King, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies; Dr. Robert C. Mason, Area Chairperson of Graduate Studies in Adult and Continuing Education; and Dr. Keith R. Getschman, Chairperson of the Department of Leadership and Educational Policy Studies. Finally, as always, I am indebted to my wife, Dr. Muriel Tomkins Niemi, for her editorial skill.

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EUROPEAN ADULT EDUCATION: SOME QUESTIONS WORTH PONDERING

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University of Saskatchewan

In 1926 Eduard Lindeman, the American adult educator, described European adult education after World War I. "In Denmark, Germany and England....," he wrote, "classes may begin with the study of economic problems but, before the learning process has gone far, the vague consciousness that man does not live by bread alone becomes manifest; the demand that learning shall point the way toward what is euphemistically called the 'higher life' is never wholly submerged...." (pp. 64-69). Much has happened in Europe since 1926: the Depression, the Fascist experience, war, the Holocaust, continuing Communist pressure, and the development of increasingly urbanized and industrialized societies that require everchanging skills. All have taken their toll of the European wish for education in tune with what Lindeman termed the "higher life." Key government advisers in Europe today are asking what is so important about this so-called "higher life" that it should be allowed to stand in the way of more "relevant" and more "appropriate" adult education -- adult education that meets the "real needs" of the people, needs that are defined almost exclusively by the planners in economic and material terms.

The rhetoric of the planners does not blatantly reject the "higher life" as it seeks converts to one or the other of at least three different phrasings of a materialist philosophy. UNESCO speaks in almost existential language about utilizing continuing or lifelong education (Faure, 1972). The Council of Europe competes with UNESCO by

developing its own slogan, "education permanente." And the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development counters with the motto it promotes, namely, "recurrent education." No matter how hard one tries to make distinctions among these terms,[1] they have become the catch-words of competitive bureaucracies, each seeking leadership in what appears to them to be Europe's growth industry in education -- adult education in behalf of economic and material prosperity. Any talk of the higher life is a smokescreen. Their primary, indeed *only*, interests are economic.

Much of the intellectual underpinning of this drive has come from Sweden, where cooperation has developed between trade unions and employers in undertaking adult education for economic prosperity.[2] Reflective of this thinking is the policy advocated by Gosta Rehn, a professor at the University of Stockholm, who has urged that adult education become part of the social insurance systems of European nations. Workers would contribute portions of their salaries to an education fund during good economic times. When technological changes or reverses in the economy cause a reduction in demand for their skills, then these workers can use their prepaid adult education insurance, in effect, to buy a new package of skills to be learned, skills which may be in more demand at that time (Rehn, 1975).

This plan and the Swedish philosophy itself sound quite reasonable and humane until one thinks more deeply. The ulterior motive is clearly a bureaucratic interest in keeping the unemployed off the streets, busy learning new skills, and full of hope for the future. In the view of the social planners, such education can be useful in providing smoother transitions in a changing technology and between business cycles. The approach thus becomes a weapon in the planners' efforts in the direction of social control.

The philosopher of adult education must analyze the impact of adult education on this instrumental use as a counter-cyclical device and as a social harmonizer. It should not take long to recognize the serious impact in associating adult education with the Gross National Product, with manpower training, and with efforts for achieving social

control. Lindeman warned us about this in 1926. He feared what he called "the pitfalls which have vulgarized public education" (pp. 7-8). In his view, adult education "begins where vocational education leaves off. Its purpose is to put meaning into the whole of life" (p. 5). He quoted the British adult educator, Basil Yeaxlee, in defining the most meaningful, worthwhile, and true adult education as "friends educating each other" (p. 7).

It is precisely this personal, free, experiential, dialogical form of adult education that European economic planners have put on the defensive today with charges that it is irrelevant and inappropriate to the material needs of the people. The planners call for increased access for people to an *improved* adult education that will help them hold and get jobs (Rehn, 1975). Step one has been taken on the path Lindeman warned would lead to vulgarization. Step two in this logic is inexorable. If the societal enterprise of job preparation and social harmonizing is to be government-supported and carried out efficiently, trained experts must be appointed to package the proper knowledge. Knowledge thus becomes defined as teacher-structured data.

Government support of any enterprise in a world dominated by industrialized economic values leads to step three, judgment of the extent to which the trainee has mastered the prescribed content. But, in applying such economic values to education, the mastery situation becomes perverse. Measurement of student mastery of subject matter is not the nature of the situation at all. Application of industrial techniques of evaluation to education leads to a judgment of the extent to which the subject matter has possessed or mastered the individual's mind, soul, and behavior. In other words, the subject matter, because it is funded by the state, becomes more important than the individual. The human being is viewed by the thoroughly modern millers of adult education as just another sack of flour to be controlled for "quality."

With "quality control" as a major purpose of their work, it is an easy next step for adult educators to become enamored of research that seeks to improve technology dedicated to achieving that "quality." Program planning, evaluation,

and other methods of adult education become means of changing the individual and adjusting him or her to the *status quo* or to the new society the planners are seeking to bring in.[3] Adult education becomes just another "method of indirect social restraint" that American sociologist E.A. Ross noted in his 1901 study, *Social Control* (1901). It would seem that once the adult educator allows himself or herself to be talked out of the philosophy of adult education as "friends educating each other," it is easy to be sucked toward a leadership responsibility that may ultimately turn into social control. Quality control can lead the adult educator into the pitfall of social control.

Although some show reluctance, European adult educators, in general, appear to be accepting the trend toward vocationalism, packaged training, and quality control as inevitable.[4] They are accepting and abetting program planning, evaluation, and research based on technicist social control values.[5] They are thus encouraging the extension to the adult level of the very situation currently under attack by critics of the schooling of children.

Some serious questioning of the trend is occurring, mostly by those deemed to be outside the narrow profession of adult education. (See Illich and Verne, 1975; Dauber and Verne, 1976.) The most extreme, yet perhaps the most realistic and understanding questioning of the philosophy currently motivating adult education in Europe, came from Ivan Illich and Etienne Verne (1975) who wrote:

> The institutionalization of permanent education will transform society into an enormous planet-sized classroom watched over by a few satellites. Only the labels will enable one to distinguish it from an enormous hospital ward, from a planetary mental home and from a penitentiary universe, where education, punishment, medical care and imprisonment are synonymous. The industrial method of teaching will be replaced by an even more destructive post-industrial conditioning. (p. 21)

Adult education has not yet reached that point in Europe. But it may well be on its way, as can be seen in several developments in West Germany. German economic and social

planners have encouraged the adult education centers, or Volkshochschulen, to break away from their traditional commitment to liberal adult education and to engage in more economically-oriented professional and vocational education. The seminal publication, *A Structural Plan for the Educational System*, produced by the prestigious German Council for Education in 1970, helped push the centers along this path. It redefined adult education as continuing education and officially blessed it "as part of the general system of education...." [6]

Key figures associated with the Volkshochschule movement could see the directions in which the planners were pointing. Joachim Knoll (1973), a professor of adult education at the University of the Ruhr and an adviser to the Adult Education Centers movement, urged "a total break with the previous self-concept of adult education which understood itself to be at a distance from the state, the school, and public education -- a break which will result in manifold administrative and other consequences" (p. 73). Voluntarism, a lack of prerequisites, and adult freedom in program planning might have to go, he indicated, if the West German adult education centers were to integrate themselves, as he wanted them to, into the school system and into employer-sponsored educational leave programs.

Knoll was ready to make a trade for what he thought might be a more relevant adult education dedicated increasingly to economic development and, therefore, worthy of much expanded government funding. He was ready to give up the crucial adult education principle of voluntarism. He was ready to accept the rigidities of schooling in adult education. And he expressed openness to reassessing the notion of the freedom of adults to plan their own programs. Knoll expressed little interest in a view of adult education as "friends educating each other" or in a philosophy that assumes that the adult must be treated as an autonomous human being. The apparent openness to "innovation" of Knoll and his colleagues is, it would seem, simply the acceptance of traditional patterns of schooling. The "innovations" are luring the German adult education centers into the "pitfalls" of which Lindeman warned.

Two examples will show how easy it has been for adult education in West Germany to become a victim of these pitfalls. One of the relatively new programs (found in many of the adult education centers) that has successfully met the so-called "real needs" of the German people has been a Volkshochschule Certificate Program. Some employers provide leave time, financial support, and eventually even salary increases for their employees who participate in these particular Volkshochschule classes. Therefore, employers want some sort of proof that the people they are underwriting are doing a competent job of learning. The centers oblige by affirming to employers and others that adult participants in these certificate classes have achieved a particular level of competency.

While employer requests for proof may seem eminently reasonable from an employer point of view, center acceptance of the certification concept has led to acceptance of notions of assessment and examination, formerly anathema to adult education. Acceptance of assessment has led to acceptance of the concept of academic standards with its content control and its quality control. Acceptance of this concept has led to acceptance of the notion of objectivity in the development, administration, and grading of the examinations. Acceptance of the concept of objectivity has led to vesting the examination in a central organization. A standardized examination has been developed to be administered to all the certificate classes by one agency in Frankfurt. As a result, local teachers may well become "teaching machines" who prepare their charges to do well on the standardized and practical tests. When, for example, the central test for a language course is likely to emphasize practical grammar for businesspeople and government employees slated for foreign postings and to downplay the cultural aspects, all the classes will tend to do likewise. Participants with a major interest in culture will encounter great difficulty in getting any class to shift its emphasis as long as anyone is enrolled for ultimate examination and certification. The willingness to innovate and meet a simple employer request for proof of achievement in certain Volkshochschule classes is threatening to sweep from these classes the opportunity for truly humane liberal adult education and for meaningful student influence over content.[7] Instead of letting other existing institutions or the employers themselves

provide this vocational and professional training, the German adult education centers are mimicking the worst elements of narrow vocational schooling.

Another example of pitfalls for adult education in West Germany can be seen in the Alpine ski town of Garmish-Partenkirchen.[8] There the Volkshochschule has shifted from a relaxed cultural operation serving a relatively small clientele of older people to a "slam-bang" vocational, media-based learning center that draws a bigger and more varied group of participants. This policy led to a seven-fold increase in center income over a five-year period, to the installation of a technologically elaborate language laboratory, and to reliance on the center by small industries and by an army mountain division commander in the area for vocational training for their employees and troops. This policy shift toward vocational training brought a diminution of the earlier interest in political and cultural education, a form of education out of place in this newly technocratic institution. Free-wheeling discussion of politics, economics, and religion could menace good relationships with business and with the military.

All of this vulgarizing has been going on behind a screen of good-sounding rhetoric and often with the best of intentions of the part of the adult educators involved. Helmuth Dolff, of the German adult education centers, really believed that the turn toward schooling would enable his institution "to do more justice to all groups and sections of our people, and to come closer to our chosen aim of serving all citizens of our country."[9]

In Britian, adult educators who sought to break down the English commitment to adult education as strictly liberal, non-vocational, non-examinable, and non-credit also have attempted to advance behind a nobly phrased purpose. Using the words of the Russell report, they have urged "the systematic expansion of the active areas of adult education into those parts of the population at present untouched."[10]

In the fact of all these good words and the promises of progress through innovation in adult education, it might be wise for the European and the North American alike to ponder longer and harder than they have done before. For,

unquestionably, the issues confronting adult education in Europe also are confronting it in North America. Lindeman was speaking to Americans in 1926 when he extolled European interest in the "higher life" and warned of too much emphasis on the practical and the materialistic in adult education in the United States. His warning still is valid more than half a century later. It is time his warning was heard in Europe and given serious attention by adult educators there. "The chief danger which confronts adult education," Lindeman (1961) wrote in summing up his concern in 1926, "lies in the possibility that we may 'Americanize' it" and overlook its real meaning" (p. xxx).

NOTES

1. Houghton, Vincent, et al. *Recurrent Education: An Alternative Future?* Milton Keynes, England: The Open University Press, 1974, p. 12.

2. Ibid., p. 13, and discussions with European adult educators at "Access to Continuing Education" conference, Oxford University, England, July 1-3, 1975.

3. Examples of this sort of inservice training material can be seen in the *Theory and Practice of Adult Education* series produced by the Padagogische Arbeitsstelle of the German Adult Education Centers Association.

4. Interview with Franz Rieger, director of the Munich Adult Education Center, February 10, 1975.

5. See, for example, the scientific technological approach -- complete with models and other mechanistic accountrements -- of the publications in the *Theory and Practice of Adult Education* series produced for German adult educators by the Volkshochschule's inservice training organization.

6. Helmuth Dolff, director of the German Adult Education Centers Association, "Can The Volkshochschulen of Today Answer the Requirements of Adult Education for Tomorrow?" mimeographed statement produced at the Deutscher Volkshochschule-Verband headquarters in Bonn, Germany.

7. This interpretation of the Volkshochschule foreign language program is not the one heard from representatives of the German centers. While there are critics within and without the organization, the official line is one of pride for an innovative examination system, a system that takes into account the practical needs and interests of adults and excludes esoteric cultural rambles into academic literature. Much of the well-meaning rhetoric is devoted to the need for any "systems approach" to be learner-oriented. The rhetoric, however, does not gainsay the reality.

8. This analysis is based on a visit and discussion with Garmisch-Partenkirchen Volkshochschule director Peter Lehmberg in his center March 19, 1975.

9. Dolff, *op. cit.*

10. E.L. Russell, *Adult Education: A Plan for Development* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1973), p. 22, and discussions with participants at the "Access to Continuing Education" conference, Oxford University, England, July 1-3, 1975.

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EVALUATING BROAD-AIMED PROGRAMS OF ADULT EDUCATION

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Adult education is receiving increased attention not only in this country but in almost every part of the world. After years of occupying a marginal position, adult education has come into the limelight. This situation has its advantages and its costs. Initially, what comes into the limelight receives attention, at least in part, because of its novelty. Sooner or later, however, what remains in the limelight more than momentarily attracts closer scrutiny. It needs to be understood and its worth needs to be established. Adult education in its many forms -- ranging from functional literacy and adult basic education to continuing professional education -- has been in the limelight long enough for the novelty to have worn off. We are well into the period when it needs to be understood and its worth established.

Many of the adult education programs that have received the greatest amount of national and international attention and funding are relatively "broad-aimed" (Weiss and Rhein, 1972). In contrast to adult education programs with relatively narrow aims (such as those seeking primarily to teach something with little concern for how what is learned could be used later), broad-aimed programs seek to affect the quality of the learners' lives through education and to help them cope more effectively with their problems (Farmer, 1975b). Included in adult education programs with relatively broad aims are those that have been funded under the Smith Lever Act of 1914, the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962, Title I of the Higher Education Act of 1965, and the Adult Education Act of 1966. Elsewhere in the world, many functional literacy programs are explicitly broad-aimed, seeking not only to teach literacy but also to affect the quality of the learners' lives and help them cope

more effectively with their problems and those of the communities in which they live.

The number and size of broad-aimed programs have increased rapidly during the past few years. Unfortunately, developing and implementing manageable, feasible, and "situation specific" ways to evaluate such programs have been largely neglected. Valid summative evaluation is needed to provide information essential to determining the worth of these programs. Valid formative evaluation is needed to produce information that can be fed back during further development of broad-aimed adult education programs in order to improve them.

In this paper, attention will be focused on broad-aimed adult education and particularly on ways to evaluate it. To this end: broad-aimed adult education will be further defined and differentiated from other types of adult education; evidence of the need for more adequate evaluation of broad-aimed adult education programs will be described; several false assumptions to be avoided in evaluation of broad-aimed adult education programs will be presented; and a way to conceptualize and implement more adequate evaluation of broad-aimed adult education programs will be suggested.

BROAD-AIMED ADULT EDUCATION DEFINED AND DIFFERENTIATED FROM OTHER TYPES OF ADULT EDUCATION

As indicated above, broad-aimed adult education seeks not only to teach something but also to affect the quality of the learners' lives through education and help them cope more effectively with their problems. It has been found helpful in conceptualizing, implementing, and evaluating adult education to distinguish the following types:

Type I--Content-Centered Adult Education. This type is provided primarily to teach knowledge, attitudes, or skills. The process starts with what is to be taught and who is to teach it. Then learners are sought who are willing to learn that type of information.

Type II--Learner-Centered Adult Education. In this type attention is paid primarily to assisting adults in learning whatever it is they wish to learn, usually with the teacher acting as a facilitator, that is, as a co-investigator or

as one who makes possible self-directed learning. Learners typically seek to learn particular knowledge, attitudes, or skills which will help solve problems important to them.

Type III--Problem-Centered Adult Education. This type primarily focuses on problems that require some form of learning in order for the problems to be solved. The approach starts with a real and pressing problem and asks: What is it in the solving of this problem to which the education of adults can contribute through the learning of knowledge, attitudes, or skills? Then the question is asked: Which adults need to be and can be involved in experiences which can lead or contribute to the solution of the problem addressed? (Farmer, 1974)

Broad-aimed adult education is a type of problem-centered adult education (Type III) which focuses mainly on community or societal problems. In broad-aimed adult education --

- there is evidence of its explicitly addressing community or societal problems by linking educational resources to those problems ;
- the problem that is addressed is significant in terms of its size, complexity, and the extent of the need (i.e., suffering, etc.);
- its approach is educational rather than manipulative or direct action-oriented ;
- there is a strong likelihood that what is learned in the education provided will result in more effective community or societal problem-solving efforts on the part of the learners, and that those improved efforts, in turn, will make a positive contribution to the amelioration of community or societal problems.(Farmer and Knox, 1976, p. 28)

In other words, broad-aimed adult education is a form of education that has been deliberately linked to community or societal problem-solving.

Some forms of education are generally viewed as being primarily of *intrinsic* value, as "having value in themselves,

for their own sake, and not as a means only" (Runes, 1942, p. 148). Other forms are of *instrumental* value, "having value due to the useful consequences which they produce, a value as a means, a value as a contribution" (Runes, 1942, p. 330). Broad-aimed adult and continuing education programs fall into the latter category. After a particular broad-aimed education program has been implemented, its instrumental value can be judged according to the extent that problem-solving efforts have improved as a result of what was learned and community or societal problems were ameliorated. Where a broad-aimed educational program has been developed and implemented but no evaluative evidence has been obtained regarding changes in problem-solving efforts of learners or the effects on problems, the program can be considered "truncated" (Farmer and Knox, 1977).

NEED FOR MORE ADEQUATE EVALUATION OF BROAD-AIMED ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

In the United States (Caro, 1970) and elsewhere (Coombs, 1973), the major focus of broad-aimed adult and continuing education programs has been on action. Little or no attention has been given to evaluation. The following reasons for this lack of evaluation emerged from a survey of administrators of continuing education programs in the midwestern United States:

- Insufficient pressure for program accountability
- Inadequate understanding of program evaluation and ways to conduct it validly and feasibly
- Reluctance to use money, time, and/or other resources on program evaluation
- Unwillingness to require or even ask that clients take the necessary time to provide evaluative feedback
- Reluctance to learn evaluative results
- Feeling that determining the worth of a program can be done adequately merely on a subjective and impressionistic basis (Green, 1974; Pennington, 1974)

According to Peters (1975) and Williams (1974), evaluations of broad-aimed educational programs for adults have tended to rely heavily on the following types of indicators of success:

- Number of "graduates"
- Number of students placed in jobs
- Number of participants
- The gain in achievement scores made by adult learners
- Degree of participation
- Level of involvement
- Gradual or rapid expansion of a project to reach more of an intended population
- Number of instructors trained since the beginning of a project
- Rate of learners' dropping-out of classes
- Degree to which the objectives set out by a program have been achieved

To be sure, from *some* role perspectives (as viewed by funders, program administrators, or teachers), positive findings regarding these indicators, individually or in combination, suggest that progress has been made in *implementing* a broad-aimed educational program and that implementation has had *some* effect on the learners. A broad-aimed education program for adults can achieve all of the above, however, and still not have a positive impact on the lives of the learners and on society. The worth of a broad-aimed educational program hinges on the nature and extent of its success in reducing community or societal problems and so improving quality of life (Farmer, 1975a).

In describing the need for more adequate evaluation of federally funded, broad-aimed adult education programs, one agency stated:

> The funding...has been carried out over the past five years without adequate assessment of the magnitude or persistence of the effects of the program upon the State in general or, more specifically, upon the institutions receiving the funding or the communities to be served. Neither the quarterly progress reports nor the self-evaluative final reports from the funded institutions, nor the onsite visits from the agency's administrators is sufficient in itself,

or in combination, to provide an objective measure of the benefits of this federal program.

> The lack of [adequate] evaluation of the program, a lack which exists not only in this State, but nationally, has prolonged the unfortunate situation in which the personnel have been forced to continue making decisions without the benefit of sufficient feedback. (*Note:* The source of this illustration is the Request for Proposal for the Evaluation of Title I, HEA, 1965 Programs in California, 1965-1972; The California Coordinating Council for Higher Education, Sacramento, 1972)

False Assumptions To Be Avoided

When a decision is made, either under external mandate or voluntarily, to evaluate a broad-aimed educational program, care should be taken to identify and avoid what can be considered false assumptions, e.g.,

- that more is necessarily better;
- that the use of evaluative tools such as testing, participation, and interviewing, in and of themselves, constitutes valid program evaluation;
- that evidence that a broad-aimed program has achieved relatively narrow objectives necessarily establishes its worth as a broad-aimed program;
- that no types of casual relationships can be established among what participants learn in broad-aimed educational programs, how they apply that knowledge in social problem-solving, and the consequences of that application;
- that the reduction of a gap between what the funders or administrators intend and what happens in the program is necessarily positive;

- that a valid evaluation of a broad-aimed education program for adults can be accomplished by focusing merely on components of the program, without regard to the program as a whole or the ways that it interrelates with its environment. (Farmer, 1975b, pp. 25-26)

Building program evaluation on such false assumptions is to distort significantly the evaluative findings and produce distorted feedback to the program.

Evaluating a broad-aimed, problem-centered adult education program (Type III) as if it were a content-centered (Type I) or a learner-centered (Type II) program would be like evaluating a water bed as if it were a standard bed (equipped with a frame on legs, a set of springs, and a mattress) or a traditional Japanese bed (a mattress placed on floormats). Moreover, evaluating a broad-aimed adult education program as if it were narrow-aimed would be inappropriate. To do so could lead to erroneous conclusions similar to those that would occur if the following story were evaluated as a narrow-aimed event:

> A sportsman in Illinois decided to go moose hunting in Minnesota on his vacation. He made reservations by telephone for a guide to take him moose hunting.
>
> When the time came to leave for Minnesota, the sportsman put his guns in the back of his jeep. Just before he left, however, he went back into the house, got his fishing equipment, and put it in the jeep.
>
> Upon arrival in Minnesota, he learned that there were no moose in the vicinity. But in talking to persons in the sports store he learned that muskie, an exciting game fish, were hitting. He cancelled his reservation for the moose guide, hired a muskie guide, and day after day caught a limit of near-record sized muskie.
>
> After his vacation, he wrote up the story and sold it to a sports magazine.

Question #1: How would you evaluate the vacation as a moose hunt (the specified narrow aim or objective of the vacation)?

If the vacation were to be evaluated mainly as a moose hunt, one would likely conclude that it was a failure, since no moose were shot.

Question #2: How would you evaluate the vacation as a broad-aimed event?

Evaluated as a broad-aimed event, the vacation clearly was a success for the following reasons:

1. The sportsman showed foresight in bring along several types of sports equipment, thereby broadening the chances of having a successful vacation.

2. He evidenced flexibility in shifting from moose hunting to muskie fishing when the circumstances warranted.

3. The fishing was excellent.

4. He obtained an unintended and unanticipated side-benefit from the money received from selling the story.

5. No desirable events or side effects reportedly occurred.

All in all, it seems to have been an excellent vacation, a conclusion completely opposite from the one arrived at by evaluating the vacation invalidly as a narrow-aimed event. Unfortunately, all too frequently, broad-aimed adult education programs have been evaluated (equally invalidly) as if they were narrow-aimed programs.

TOWARD MORE ADEQUATE EVALUATION OF BROAD-AIMED ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

During the past few years, a number of efforts (Farmer, 1974; Farmer and Papagiannis, 1975) have been made to conceptualize and implement more adequate ways of evaluating

broad-aimed adult education programs. In essence, the approach that has been developed --

- reflects a broader-aimed evaluation approach than is implied in most other evaluative efforts dealing with broad-aimed educational programs for adults;

- is concerned with the evaluative needs not only of those who are providing the program, but also of the learners, instructors, funders, and other client groups who are interested in the program being evaluated.

- emphasizes the importance of looking at environmental constraints that affect the implementation of broad-aimed educational programs for adults, problem-solving efforts of learners as a result of such programs, and the impact of those efforts; and

- deals with broad-aimed educational programs for adults as a chain of events, starting with the initial exposure to an idea to the actual implementation of that idea and the consequences of implementation. (Because broad-aimed educational programs for adults are generally viewed as a *purposive* type of education, intended to serve useful ends or functions though not necessarily as a result of deliberate design, it seems appropriate to focus attention not only on intended consequences but also on unintended but anticipated consequences and unintended, unanticipated consequences.)

Attempts to scan all aspects of a broad-aimed adult education program can lead to the identification of numerous evaluative questions. After being overwhelmed by evaluative questions, one group of evaluators observed the following:

> The question-generating approach got wholly out of hand. Questions multiplied like the proverbial rabbits, while the members of the task force looked on with Malthusian foreboding. Also, the question-generating process in which we found ourselves ensnarled seemed more circular than linear in direction. First, we engaged

> in fission and smashed big questions into numerous subquestions. Next, reacting in dismay to what we had wrought, we fused subquestions into major questions which closely resembled their forebears of two generations ago. It is not to be denied that futile tasks can be instructive, but it is our duty to urge others to seek a different conveyancy rather than mounting our treadmill.

In a recently published monograph on program evaluation, Farmer and Papagiannis (1975) concluded at length:

> Whatever conveyance is used, it needs to lead to program evaluations that are manageable, feasible, and situation specific; that portray the wholeness of programs and the relationship between them and their environments; and that provide a defensible basis for deciding exactly what is needed.
>
> No prefabricated approach, no evaluative model or design, or any set of general evaluative questions can provide the type of evaluations that have all the above characteristics. Rather, a "decision-making" approach is called for. In this approach, persons associated with the program, along with one or more external evaluators and possibly a representative of those who help fund the program, collaborate in planning and conduct a specific evaluation effort that takes into account each of the foregoing conditions.
>
> Looking at only a few isolated components of a program is an invalid approach to evaluation. Yet, under most circumstances, evaluating a whole program in great depth is not feasible. One effective tool in the decision-making process might be what Amitai Etzioni calls "mixed scanning," which entails scanning a program and its environment much as an infantry scout scans a battlefield under fire. The scout rapidly views his strategic position, identifies potential danger or opportunity spots, and gives them close scrutiny. He does

not have time to gather all the facts, nor can he look at only what is in front of him. His task is to scan, assign priorities, and select those areas that need careful scrutiny. Failure to do this may well result in a missed opportunity or a costly mistake.

The following components will typically need to be scanned:

- Need for the program
- Philosophical considerations
- Values
- Assumptions underlying or otherwise related to the program
- The degree of the program's development, in general and in local situations
- The context or environment in which the program functions
- Alternative ways that the program has been and is being implemented
- Consequences of the program
- Explanations of consequences -- the extent to which those consequences have been attributed to the program.

The effectiveness of a program is judged not only by each of these components but also, and perhaps more importantly, by the relationship between them.

If little or nothing is known about the results of the program, major attention might well focus on results. If, however, there is ample evidence of the nature and extent of the results and reason to think that some of its components are functioning unsatisfactorily, then major attention might better focus on the educational process, on the program inputs from learners, teachers, and administrators, and on the program's context.

In this decision-making process, care needs to be taken not to identify as critical so many aspects that the evaluative effort becomes swamped with too many details. At the same time, the evaluator will want to examine the aspects selected from the point of view of the program as a whole --

how they fit into and affect the program and how much they contribute to the overall worth of the program. (Farmer, 1975b, pp. 29-31)

In gathering evaluative data concerning broad-aimed adult education programs, the use of what Dexter (1970) described as "elite and specialized interviewing" has been found useful. Qualitative analysis of resulting evaluative data can be accomplished through "content analysis" (Merton, 1968). "Discriminant analysis" (Tatsuoka, 1970) has been found particularly useful in quantitative analysis of resulting evaluative data.

CONCLUSION

At the outset we noted that adult education is enjoying the limelight. It was suggested that if this situation continues, adult educators will need to establish the worth of their programs through valid evaluation, particularly if those programs are publicly financed and broad-aimed. The need to develop and implement more adequate ways to evaluate such programs was described, along with suggestions for doing so through the use of "mixed scanning."

Developing and implementing innovative adult education programs can be challenging and rewarding. Perhaps, even more challenging is developing and implementing appropriate ways of evaluating them so that we can learn from our experiences and demonstrate the worth of the programs to a public who currently seems to be favorably inclined toward adult education.

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PAST DEVELOPMENTS AND FUTURE TRENDS IN NONTRADITIONAL EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

The traditional concept of education has evolved over a period of years. For most students, higher education was a four-year period of uninterrupted residential study. For most colleges and universities, the curriculum was organized to provide students with a body of knowledge drawn from a predetermined structure organized around specialities.

Although there appeared to be serenity on the surface on the college campuses in the late 1960s and early 1970s, emerging signs indicated that the traditional form of higher education would be challenged. The rapid growth of population in the post-war years was reflected in increasing numbers of students who sought admission to colleges and universities. The number of high school graduates who did so escalated for several years until almost fifty percent were in some type of postsecondary education; in fact, that figure may now be higher.

In addition to rapidly increasing state appropriations for higher education, the federal government began allocating vast sums of money for various purposes, including research. For many faculty, the lure of federal grants made involvement in graduate work and research more attractive and rewarding than teaching undergraduates. Hence, personal contact between faculty members and students declined. In addition, criticism was directed toward much research which students believed was being conducted to further the war in Southeast Asia. What began as student protest over the involvement of institutions of higher education in supporting unpopular government policies led to student challenges to the existing educational structure.

As enrollments grew in the 1960s, there was increasing demand that admission to higher education be more widely available to everyone seeking admission. Minority groups, charging that standards were biased against them, began to challenge the criteria for admission. Adults who had been unable to attend college on a residential basis sought admission as a means of furthering their personal and vocational opportunities. Feminist groups sought more consideration and began to ask for programs planned to fit their particular needs. Many of these groups believed that the traditional program was not appropriate for them.

Along with many external forces shaping educational changes, strong internal forces were bringing alterations in the traditional concepts of education. As higher education faced peaking enrollments, competed for the tax dollar, and fought inflation, there arose a questioning of the form and substance of education.

The designation most frequently given to one development in higher education which was a response to these various forces was "nontraditional education," whose various forms have been described as "external degree," "open learning," "alternative education," "open-access learning," and "non-formal education."

DEFINITIONS

Because of the many different terms for identifying various forms of nontraditional education, it is difficult to define. In one of the early books, nontraditional education was defined as a group of changing educational patterns caused by the changing needs and opportunities of society. Using this concept, the Commission on Nontraditional Study applied nontraditional education to higher education by suggesting two alternatives: (a) the term refers to learning experiences that do not take place under the auspices and supervision of some formally organized higher education institution (Gross and Cross, 1972) *or* (b) it may refer to learning that does take place under such auspices and supervision but differs significantly from the other formal education efforts taking place there (Gould, 1973). Another definition took the position that the concept was more an attitude than a system (Gould, 1973).

Another way to understand the meaning of nontraditional education is to identify some of its characteristics. Valley (1977-78) identified the following characteristics of nontraditional higher education programs:

1. *The Broadened Base of Degree-Granting Authority....* there are many non-university degree-granting institutions, and their number is increasing.

2. *The Emergence of Competence As a Basis for Awarding Degrees....*competence emerged as an alternative to the traditional yardsticks of time and amount of concrete knowledge as a basis for academic recognition.

3. *The Discovery of the Adult College-Level Student.*

4. *The Student As Planner-Designer of His or Her Educational Program.*

5. *The Recognition of Experiential Learning....*the encouragement and provision of...opportunities, for the assessment of out-of-classroom learning, and the awarding of academic credit for that learning.

6. *Specialized Education Services....*a different kind of educational counseling-advising agency has emerged....

7. *The Reinterpretation of Residence....*

8. *The Beginning of Compulsory Adult Education....*the trend toward mandatory continuing education has been accelerated by federal legislation and, as requirements for continuing professional education increase, mandatory requirements seem to become greater and more realistic.

9. *More Skill in the Application of Technology to the Delivery of Instruction....*

10. *The Questioning of Education As Preparation for Life....* a new approach is emerging that encourages people to search for multiple opportunities to move back and forth between the worlds of work and education according to their individual needs.(pp. 3-7, 37)

This writer also has defined nontraditional education by identifying some of its characteristics, several of which are similar to Valley's. Not all forms of nontraditional education will possess all of these characteristics but generally will include several. They are: learner-oriented education: credit for experiential learning; use of instructional technology; competency-based learning; use of learning contract; emphasis on program flexibility; and de-emphasis on time, space, and location factors.

ANTECEDENTS

Although the particular combination of education with instructional and learning elements was brought together in the early 1970s, the movement had its antecedents in earlier educational innovations. Gould and Cross (1973) indicated that there have always been nontraditional approaches to education in one place or another, some of them very successful. Cowlan (1975) also noted that open learning and nontraditional education are not really new phenomena. He indicated that they can be traced back to the Morrill Act of 1862, which contained language similar to contemporary phrases like open access model.

Some even have traced elements of nontraditional education to Socrates, who taught in the streets rather than in classrooms. As with other innovations which do not appear suddenly without roots, nontraditional education had much "tradition" on which to draw when the favorable conditions developed for its growth in the early 1970s.

THEORETICAL BASES

Nontraditional education is described in the literature basically in terms of such dimensions as instructional procedures, delivery systems, and institutional bases rather than by the identification of a theoretical or philosophical rationale. However, while Park (1976) dealt with such issues as "new students," "changing methods of instruction," all ways of describing aspects of non-traditional education, no conceptual framework was provided.

If one could draw a theory base from the hypothesized characteristics of the clientele, the nature of the instructional procedures, and management systems, non-traditional education would seem to appeal to learner dependent types (Witkin, 1977). When Cross (1978) discussed the "new learners," she also seemed to be discussing the type of learner who resists the imposition of structure, desires socialization, and is likely to be in some stage of transition.

Although there is little "hard" data to support a contention that the best nontraditional learners would also do well in traditional programs, there is much informal support for such a thesis. In fact, many adult educators believe that the self-directed learner (as discussed by Knowles) and those who are the most successful at learning projects (as defined by Tough) are more likely to be learner independents than dependents. Some would argue that the extensive orientation systems developed by many of the nontraditional institutions serve the purpose of sorting out those types of learners who would not succeed in those systems. They place a great responsibility on individual learners to structure and conduct their own learning.

There is not, therefore, a clear theoretical base for nontraditional education. A belief on the part of some observers that the same person at different stages of life, especially at transition points, may require very different approaches -- including more or less structure. This suggests that the same person may require traditional approaches at one point and nontraditional at another.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENTS

The Commission on Nontraditional Study needed data on which to base its 1972 recommendations regarding the potential number and types of nontraditional students. Therefore, a survey (the "demand study") was conducted by Educational Testing Survice in order to gather such data (Carp et al., 1975). The results indicated the following points regarding potential learners:

- Forty percent are under age thirty.
- Both interest in and actual participation in learning activities begin to decline during the early thirties among both men and women and drop sharply after age fifty-five.
- Whites are somewhat better represented among learners, with Blacks slightly under-represented.
- The high participation in learning by single people appears to be related to the relatively young age of the subsample.

Examining the characteristics of potential nontraditional students who attend traditional colleges and universities, Munday (1976) reported the following:

1. ...the data show that nontraditional students outnumber traditional students about two to one; the largest groups of nontraditional students are commuters and low-income students.

2. ...nontraditional students are several times as likely to prefer a college near home; this is in contrast to traditional students who prefer going 100 miles away or more.

3. ...the level of tuition is of more concern to the nontraditional students.

4. College size does not seem to make much difference in student preferences.

5. On the whole, private colleges do not fare well in the preferences of nontraditional students....more nontraditional than traditional students prefer the public two-year college....

6. Part-time students are more likely than other non-traditional students to aspire to two years or less of college....nontraditional students are more apt to aspire to only two years of college.

7. As a group, nontraditional students are more likely than traditional students to need help in reading, study habits, and math....students in all of the nontraditional groups bring with them to college less academic preparation than the traditional student.

8. Of all the nontraditional groups, the part-time, evening, and commuter students are the most affluent.

9. Women outnumber men in all of the nontraditional groups; this is especially pronounced with Black students.

10. Many students belong to more than one group. Several of the nontraditional groups overlap considerably, as one would expect. We could hypothesize that non-traditional students are made up of two groups of students somewhat distinct from one another. Some are part-time, older, commuter, and evening students. Others can be characterized as having low family income, being non-English speaking, being Black, being Chicano, and having low test scores.(pp. 681-699)

Cross (1978) has written about the "new" students seeking admission to postsecondary institutions. She has suggested that females and ethnic minorities seeking positions in the labor market will constitute the majority of the new, i.e., nontraditional, students.

With regard to the potential number of nontraditional students based upon various clientele studies, it should be noted that the actual number of participants has been considerably less than predicted. It seems evident, therefore, that needs assessment techniques lack a high degree of precision as far as determining who will actually enroll.

SUBJECTS

Data has been collected regarding the subject matter which nontraditional students reported they would like to study (Carp et al., 1975). The major findings indicated the following points:

- Most people seem mainly oriented toward improved adaptability for simple everyday living (investment, business skills, home repairs, sewing and cooking, gardening, physical fitness), together with a modicum of personal enjoyment and satisfaction (crafts, sports and games, travel).

- Of forty-eight individual topics, investment and related financial matters have the greatest appeal, with twenty-nine percent of the respondents reporting interest; followed by sports and games, twenty-eight percent; crafts, sewing and cooking, twenty-seven percent; business skills, gardening, and physical fitness, twenty-six percent.

- Vocational subjects are of greatest immediate interest, since the vocational category receives forty-three percent of first choices and general education and hobbies and recreation tie for second place with only thirteen percent each. Among the sixteen vocational subjects listed, business skills such as typing, accounting, and bookkeeping are by a sizable margin the most frequent first choice, at nine percent.

Experience has indicated that the perceptions prospective students have about a subject and the academic treatment of that subject often will be two different things. For example, prospective students might identify an interest in accounting as a subject which would help them prepare their income taxes, while the content might not have a high degree of application.

Another factor which might change some of the subject choices is the return to the "so-called" basics. With heavy emphasis on the basics, there may be less demand for such subjects as recreation and personal development and more demand for traditional general education.

METHODS

In the "demand study" cited earlier (Carp et al., 1975), potential nontraditional students also were questioned about how they would like to learn. Some of the major conclusions were as follows:

- ...the most widely preferred method, chosen by twenty-eight percent...is lectures or classes. On-the-job training or internship followed with twenty-one percent, and short-term conferences, institutes, and workshops ranked third with thirteen percent....there is little existing interest in less conventional modes: only two percent or less chose travel-study programs, television or video tape cassettes, or records and audio cassettes.

- Interest in on-the-job training declined with age and with educational and occupational level....

- Blacks and particularly Black women prefer on-the-job training; Blacks more often favor group learning while whites are proportionally more interested in individualized approaches, including independent study, private individual lessons, and correspondence courses.

It is interesting that one of the major characteristics of nontraditional education is the use of instructional technology. Responses by potential students place various technologies such as TV, video and audio cassettes very low, possibly because students have traditional perceptions as to how learning takes place. However, Cross (1978) cautioned that final decisions should not be made totally on the basis of student preferences. She has stressed that a too-literal interpretation of market surveys should convince us that we need to offer imagination and leadership in providing new options as well as being responsive to current desires if we are to plan adequately for the learning society.

In short, creative and appropriate use of educational technology may be responded to quite favorably by nontraditional students under certain circumstances, if used wisely.

PREFERRED LOCATIONS

Another central issue is that learning can occur in settings other than a school or campus. The "demand study" (Carp et al., 1975) also revealed the following:

- The most popular choice is the public high school with sixteen percent; followed by home, two-year college, or technical institute, and community free school, each with ten percent; and four-year college and private business school with eight percent each.

- Forty-five percent prefer to study in institutions comprising the educational system. Thirty-six percent prefer other less conventional locations. Ten percent choose home study, and five percent favor their place of employment.

- Those with at least a high school diploma want to learn through a greater variety of educational institutions than do those without diplomas.

- Twice as many adults with college experience or a degree want to learn at a four-year college or graduate school, compared with the less educated adults.

It is, however, difficult to equate this data with the findings of Tough (1978) who recently reported that seventy percent of the learning projects in this area are self-planned (not assisted by anyone). If, as he reported, ninety percent of all adults are involved in one or more learning projects, then much learning occurs outside an institutional setting.

BARRIERS

The "demand study" (Carp et al., 1975) also sought reasons why potential nontraditional students might not actually undertake educational experiences.

- Financial cost was the most widely reported potential obstacle, cited by slightly more than half....Second was not enough time, reported by forty-six percent of the sample, followed by not wanting to go to school full-time, home responsibilities, job responsibilities, and the amount of time required to complete the program, each indicated by at least one-fifth of the group.

- Twice as many men as women mentioned job responsibilities; the opposite occurs with home responsibilities, and almost ten times as many women as men cite lack of child care as a barrier to learning.

As indicated, the familiar problem of finances was the major obstacle to broader participation by nontraditional students. Recent changes making federal assistance available to part-time students may perhaps address this issue. Also ranking high was time available to undertake any kind of learning. Reports to this writer after some recent home visits by educators to parents of elementary and secondary students confirm the hectic life schedule kept by many families especially where both parents are working or in single parent families. The time problem, indeed, may well be a highly significant deterrent to learning.

SUCCESS OF GRADUATES

One of the points stressed by many writers in this area is that individuals who complete nontraditional programs must be able to compete with graduates of traditional programs in the marketplace. This also includes acceptance for advanced study by graduate schools. Several research studies have evaluated graduates of nontraditional programs. One such study (Beshiri, 1978) compared 219 graduates of Florida International University's external degree program and a randomly selected sample of sixty-seven graduates of its traditional on-campus degree programs. The external degree program awards credit for, among other things, life/work experience consisting of knowledge and expertise that cannot be duplicated in regular classroom courses. This is the only comparative study of graduates of traditional and nontraditional students which the writer was able to find. The results tended to indicate that there is little difference between the group that graduated from the traditional on-campus programs and those who graduated from the external degree program in terms of attitudes toward goal attainment, application, and acceptance to graduate schools, acceptance to job positions, and problems reported during and after participation in the academic programs.

Another study (Nolen et al., 1977) measured faculty attitudes toward a nontraditional studies program offered through the College of Agriculture at the University of Missouri. The purpose of the program was to provide a means for students to pursue course work leading to a bachelors degree without requiring them to return to the campus. All 337 faculty members in the College of Agriculture were sent questionnaires and 225 (sixty-seven percent) responded. To the surprise of the researchers, seventy-two percent of the respondents did not perceive the nontraditional degree as less rigorous than the traditional degree from the College of Agriculture. Seventy-two percent of the respondents felt that one could obtain a bachelors degree competency without spending four years in college, while twenty-three percent felt that the establishment of a nontraditional degree represented a lowering of standards; only fifteen percent felt that the nontraditional degree was unfair to students enrolled in the traditional program.

Another study in this area (Losty and Gardiner, 1978) was conducted with graduates of the Stephens College Without Walls Program, a project designed to extend the opportunity to earn a degree to persons over age twenty-three who, because of family commitments, were unable to enter a traditional residence program. All of the eighty-nine students were sent questionnaires, and responses were received from sixty-two of them. The results showed that responses of graduates indicated benefits of the degree in terms of two criteria: increased effectiveness in employment and in general life situations. It also provided no significant problems in terms of access to further education where the B.A. is the appropriate degree for entrance.

Empire State College (ESC) has published two studies in this area. The first was based on 141 cases (Lehmann, 1974); the second included responses from 591 graduates (Palola and Bradley, 1973). In the latter, forty-four percent of the graduates applied to graduate schools and seventy-four percent were accepted by at least one institution. There was a drop in rejection to graduate school from nineteen percent in the 1973 study to five percent in the 1975 study when multiple applications to graduate schools were considered. In the former study, fifty-three percent of the graduates indicated that their employment circumstances had improved as a direct result of having an ESC degree.

Eight percent of the graduates reported that they had experienced difficulties in seeking employment with the ESC degree due to problems in interpreting the nontraditional transcript to potential employers. The graduates of these nontraditional programs appeared to be satisfied with the status and recognition provided by their nontraditional degrees and experienced no more difficulty in getting admitted to graduate school than those with more traditional preparation.

COST EFFECTIVENESS

One of the arguments for nontraditional programs at a time of no more than steady state budgets for higher education, if not actual dollar decreases, is that such programs should be cost effective compared with traditional programs. Among the reasons why such arguments are advanced are that classroom buildings, libraries, student services, and other similar requirements of traditional universities are not necessary at nontraditional institutions.

One of the nontraditional programs which has studied the costs of educating students is Empire State College. In 1974-1975, during the early life of ESC, the costs per student were approximately the same as for the established four-year colleges in the State University of New York system and were considerably below those of new emerging traditional institutions (Meierhenry, 1975). By the 1975-1976 school year, it was projected that per pupil costs would be less than those in either the emerging or established four year colleges.

Another study (Parker, 1975) conducted at the Community College of Vermont, a nontraditional two-year college, reported that the cost per full-time equivalent student at the college was about sixty percent of that of the other state colleges.

These two studies can hardly be considered representative of the instructional costs involved in all the various configurations of nontraditional programs. Nevertheless, they suggest that costs might be less than for traditional programs.

ACCREDITATION

One of the ways in which quality control of nontraditional programs is being monitored is through various accrediting bodies, including regional associations. Among the accrediting bodies concerned with nontraditional and external degree programs is the North Central Association, which has worked in cooperation with such groups as the Council of the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commission of Higher Education, the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation, and the Council of Graduate Deans (Thrash, 1976; Baldi, 1976).

A primary concern of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association is to encourage innovation consistent with institutional goals and to develop new and appropriate evaluation tools and measures of quality so that assurances can be provided that valid learning opportunities are offered.

Accrediting agencies are attempting to develop standards which will give consumer protection to both the recipient of nontraditional degrees and the employing agency.

FORMS

Nontraditional educational programs consist of either new forms of learning in entirely different settings or adjustments of more traditional learning environments. In either case, efforts to provide education in a nontraditional manner are aimed at fitting the needs of the learner. A description of several examples are cited below:

(1) University Without Walls is carried out by a consortium of twenty-five colleges and universities which have identified themselves as the Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities. Although each institution is free to develop its own program, the central concept is that of building highly individualized and flexible programs in which students construct their own study plans and establish the community contacts through which their plans are implemented.

(2) The original concept of the Open University was formulated by the British Government in 1963. Designed to offer broader opportunities to adults by removing obstacles to a university education, the Open University provided higher education on a wide basis through various instructional approaches, including the use of media. The basic instructional pattern is centered around specifically designed materials which are distributed to students throughout Great Britain, with broadcast material disseminated via radio and television. Close contact is maintained with students by tutors and guidance personnel at some 250 local study centers. The University of Mid-America exemplifies many of these characteristics.

(3) An early, and possibly the first, form of an external degree was offered by the University of London. It was based upon the idea that students could earn a degree solely by performing successfully on examinations. This form of the external degree has enabled students from all over the world to complete degree requirements at the University of London.

(4) As noted, nontraditional programs may be represented by new forms or by modifications of existing ones. Both are reflected in undergraduate programs in colleges such as Empire State in New York, Minnesota Metropolitan in Minneapolis, and Merimac Community in Vermont. The experimental small college program established a number of years ago at Brooklyn College was an attempt to redesign a program of liberal education for adults who had not had contact with classroom learning for some time. A somewhat different approach was organized at the University of Oklahoma, which established a program leading to the degree of Bachelor of General Studies. Antioch, Raymond, and Hampshire are examples of colleges which have undertaken major transformations of their existing programs to conform to some of the general principles of non-traditional education.

THE FUTURE

A basic question is whether nontraditional educational programs spawned in the late 1960s and early 1970s were a response to a unique set of circumstances or whether the various forces brought into focus a need for such an approach on a permanent basis. Nelson (1974) has argued that there were five facts of life about higher education which, if corrupted or even exploited by external degree programs, could bode ill for its future. In another article, (London, 1972) reported that University Without Walls was a "mixed bag." After observing several colleges and universities associated with the Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities, the author felt that the movement was neither the panacea some administrators and students believed it to be nor the wedge that would open the way to lowering standards in higher education.

It is this writer's belief that there was -- and continues to be -- a place for nontraditional programs within traditional institutions. There will continue to be students who, for a variety of reasons, are resistant to the imposition of structure and requirements from the outside. There might even be a greater need to provide educational opportunities for a large range of learners who cannot come to the campus and/or cannot meet the typical schedule of a traditional institution.

As to whether there will be a great expansion of institutions devoted entirely to nontraditional programs, this writer is doubtful. It appears that there are sufficient institutions across the country that appeal to a local, regional, or national clientele in order to meet the needs of such students.

What is happening -- and will continue to happen -- is the development of programs *within* most traditional colleges and universities to meet the needs of nontraditional students. Masters (1978) has suggested greatly increased emphasis on a variety of new formats and organizational patterns. Such a major university as The Ohio State University has established an Office of Continuing Education to pull together existing continuing education and evening courses in order to upgrade

services to the older and nontraditional student. In recommending the reorganization to the University Trustees, OSU President Harold L. Enarson stated that --

> Because continuing learners must work and often provide for families, they require special kinds of programs built into special time frames -- evening programs, concentrated weekend courses, summer short courses, non-traditional programs that blend independent study with video cassettes, occasional meetings with an instructor, TV lectures, programs delivered through Ohio State's network of cooperative extension centers, and noncredit conferences or courses that improve vocational skills or upgrade professional knowledge. ("OSU Responds...," 1979)

It is obvious that the impetus given to nontraditional education over the last decade will have continuing and long-term implications for many postsecondary institutions. What began as a protest and initially was perceived as a negative movement may, in the long run, prove to be a positive development for students and a slow but creative institutional response to a genuine need.

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IMPROVING PRACTICE IN ADULT EDUCATION THROUGH DISSEMINATION AND UTILIZATION OF INNOVATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of improving practice in education has been addressed in many different ways by researchers from many different disciplines. Social psychologists, for example, have suggested that positive change in education can be best accomplished by manipulating the values and attitudes of the educators in charge, while organizational analysts frequently have suggested that altering organizational structure is the best method for effecting change. Theories of organizational change abound, and most are supported by sound empirical evidence.

Despite the growing body of knowledge pertaining to the improvement of practice in education, it is clear that practice still needs to be improved. Since the early 1960s, for example, much attention has been devoted to the education of disadvantaged adults. Indeed, the Adult Education Act of 1966 was enacted primarily to serve this population. Yet, in 1974, eight years after the passage of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States (1975) issued an evaluation report of the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program which read in part:

> Only about one percent of the Adult Education program's estimated target population of 57 million adults with less than eight years of school have participated in any given year. (p. 9)

Clearly this record indicated a need for improvement in ABE. Similarly, Cooperative Extension has been criticized

for its failure to reach poor, small-scale farmers, and CETA programs have been castigated for their poor record of training adults to gain and hold jobs.

Given the hard work and dedication of thousands of adult educators, why have these problems remained unsolved? Why have we not improved adult education in the direction of realizing its maximum potential for improvement? Though the reasons are extremely complex, we can make one generalization, namely, that part of the reason is that we do not possess the knowledge that such improvement requires. If lack of knowledge is a problem, what are its causes? At least two possibilities present themselves. Either the knowledge does not yet exist, in which case the obvious need is increased research; or the knowledge does exist but has not been made available in usable form to practitioners. If the second possibility is true, then the key to improve practice lies in more effective dissemination and utilization of knowledge, and the improvement of those processes should form a major priority for adult educators.

In 1974, Gordon Darkenwald and I were fortunate to have the opportunity of conducting a national USOE-funded study focusing on the dissemination and utilization of 309(b) project results in ABE. (USOE Grant OEG-0-71-4411 awarded to Teachers College, Columbia University, and directed by Dr. Jack Mezirow.) The 309(b) projects were special demonstration projects funded by USOE to promote improved practice in ABE. At the time the study was conducted, between ten and twenty percent of all funds allocated to ABE were to be expended on this research and development effort, and, in 1973, fifty-five projects were funded for a total of $6,734,400.

In studying dissemination-utilization in ABE, we conceived the dissemination-utilization system as having three parts: the 309 projects which were conducting the demonstration efforts and disseminating the results; the USOE Bureau of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education which awarded and monitored the projects; and the local ABE programs which were the intended users. These components were assumed to be integrated and, therefore, affecting each other. The results of this study will form the primary basis for this paper. (For a detailed report, see Darkenwald et al., 1974.)

DISSEMINATION AND UTILIZATION

At the outset, it is useful to place dissemination-utilization in a context. But first it is important to make a distinction between dissemination and utilization, since all too frequently the terms are used as if they are conceptually synonymous. Dissemination is basically a communication process whereby knowledge of various kinds is transferred from one party to another. Utilization is the act or process of using new practices or acting on new knowledge. Though effective dissemination is obviously necessary for knowledge utilization, dissemination alone is by no means sufficient if utilization is to occur. The distinction between dissemination and utilization suggests a vital point: if we are to improve practice in adult education, we must concentrate on engendering utilization of better practices and new knowledge, not merely on their communication or dissemination.

In examining dissemination and utilization, Rogers and Shoemaker (1974) provide a useful model: a source (S) sends a message (M) via certain channels (C) to the receiver (R). For obvious reasons, the model has been termed the S-M-C-R model. Its utility lies in its ability to conceptually categorize the variables which affect dissemination and utilization. In the ABE arena, 309 projects are a source, knowledge of new practices is the presumed message, the channels are various, and the intended receivers are local ABE programs. Such a model provides a useful framework for understanding the following analysis.

In order to determine whether or not 309(b) project results had been disseminated to local ABE directors, we asked a random sample of 805 local ABE directors how familiar they were with six 309(b) projects which had conducted relatively extensive dissemination efforts. Results are as follows:

Table 1: Local ABE Directors' Familiarity with and Use of 309(b) Project Ideas and Products

(In Percent, N=805)

Project	Never Heard of	Heard of but Have No Details	Quite Familiar but Have *Not* Used Products	Quite Familiar and *Have* Used Products
Texas Guidance & Counseling	52.7	29.7	8.9	8.7
Project RFD	60.1	25.2	11.7	3.0
Communi-Link	63.7	19.5	10.7	6.1
SWCEL ABE Project	66.5	22.3	7.1	4.1
Adult Armchair	67.2	20.0	7.4	5.5
Appalachian ABE Center	31.4	40.8	15.3	12.5
SREB ABE Project	66.3	19.1	6.1	8.5

(Source: Darkenwald et al., 1974, p. 125)

Examining the percentage of directors who had never heard of the six projects, we found that in the case of every project but one, a majority of local directors had never heard of the projects listed. The percentage of directors who had actually used products from our six test projects ranged from only 12.5 percent for the most extensively used project to a dismal 3.0 percent for the least extensively used project. The obvious conclusion was that the results of 309(b) projects were not reaching local ABE directors. Why?

Part of the answer lies in the communication process itself. After visiting seven 309(b) projects and studying their dissemination efforts at first hand, it became apparent

that most failed to effectively target their dissemination efforts. Targeting means that the dissemination message must be directed toward the expected receiver (user) group and that the channel of communication used must be able to convey the message to that group. (Note: For an excellent discussion of "targeting" see Philip Kutler, *Marketing for Non Profit Organization*.(New York: Prentice Hall, 1977.) In most cases, 309(b) projects either had no clear conception of who the potential users of their products were or had consciously chosen to disseminate their results to other groups. For example, one project spent most of its time disseminating to elementary and secondary education teachers, and another group disseminated primarily to television station directors. A large group of projects considered their target populations to be students in their own programs and targeted no dissemination efforts towards other programs. In addition, the communication channel was often inappropriate. For example, project results were disseminated through presentations at national conventions, even though most potential users were underfunded and part-time programs that could not afford to send staff to such conventions.

Another important problem related to the message communicated. Most projects communicated only awareness-producing information about themselves. Yet, in order to adopt an innovation or to use new knowledge, a practitioner requires more than mere awareness that a project exists. Surely no rational practitioner will use knowledge unless he or she receives assurance that it is valid. Few will adopt an innovation unless they are confident that the new practice will perform better than the old one. Thus, the dissemination process must convey detailed, valid, evaluative information. It also must convey replication information, for once a user knows that an improved practice exists and has been assured of the validity of that practice, he or she must know how to implement it. The dissemination message, therefore, should be a complete one conveying all the information a practitioner requires to actually adopt or act on the new knowledge or practice.

Another problem identified by our study pertained to the source of dissemination, the 309 projects, which tend to be temporary systems. That is, 309 projects are funded to produce a new product or new knowledge for specific periods of time. Once their work has been completed,

funding terminates, the project or work group disbands, and no one remains to conduct dissemination. Consequently, the results of research and demonstration projects tend to evaporate quickly once the work group has completed its initial task. This problem of lack of continuity is compounded by the nature of the normal work cycle. In most cases, no finished product appears until the last moment in the life of a research and development work group when there is neither time nor money for dissemination.

We found that the dissemination-communication process in ABE was affected by still another factor. As Rogers and Shoemaker (1974) noted, dissemination takes place through communication channels. A collection of such channels used by a particular population often is termed a communication network. Communication networks, both formal and informal, exist among ABE directors in nearly every locale in the United States. It is through those networks that most external knowledge about adult education is transmitted to and received by ABE directors.

We asked our sample of ABE directors about the sources of information they tend to rely on for information and assistance in problem-solving. The results are reported below.

Table 2: Local ABE Directors' Degree of Reliance on Selected Sources of Information and Assistance

Source	Mean Scale Score
Your own staff	4.2
*State ABE department	3.9
Your own expertise	3.9
ABE students	3.4
*Other ABE directors	3.0
*Professional publications	2.9
*Experts in the school system	2.8
*State or regional adult education associations	2.5
*Commercial publishers	2.5
*University or college resources	2.3
*National adult education associations	2.1
*309(b) projects	1.7

*Sources of information external to local ABE programs
(Source: Darkenwald et al., 1974, p. 30)

Though sources internal to the program, such as their own staff or the director's own expertise, were generally rated higher than external sources (indicating a high degree of self-reliance among ABE programs), it was clear that state education departments and other ABE directors were seen as viable sources of external information. Yet rarely did 309 projects utilize these existing communication networks in communicating their message. More frequently, the projects attempted to establish new communication networks, such as workshops or project newsletters, for the sole purpose of communicating their results. In such cases, not only did the projects have to incur the time and expense of developing a new channel, but no guarantee existed that the potential adopters would use it. By contrast, the use of existing communication channels saves time and money and holds out greater hope that potential users will get the message.

Although many problems were associated with the manner in which project results were communicated, even more problems seemed to be associated with what was being disseminated. Simply stated, the products of research and development lacked usability from the practitioners' perspective. That problem assumed many dimensions. The first issue was relevance. Most of the products and knowledge did not address the practical problems experienced by a wide range of practitioners. For example, 309 projects were commonly focused on problems unique to special client groups, such as Mexican Americans in the Southwest or itinerant laborers. In short, project results were not generalizable beyond their own client groups or locale. Nor were efforts made to promote greater generalizability. For example, a commendable television series for illiterate adults was replete with references to Wisconsin, a condition which limited its use elsewhere. The point is that if widespread adoption is our aim, the results of research and development must be applicable to a range of users. We cannot expect the results of a project narrowly focused on the unique needs of illiterate, rural Native Americans of the Apache tribe to be used in New York City.

Frequently, projects ignored the issue of adoption costs, producing results that carried purchased prices well beyond the means of local ABE programs. There also were costs associated with the time required for adoption, including extensive staff training. Many programs staffed

primarily by part-time workers or volunteers could not afford to make such commitments.

Complexity of product is another issue. Generally speaking, the more complex the product, the more difficult it is to disseminate and secure adoption. Complex products generally require extensive dissemination methods that utilize training or other face to face strategies. Such methods are expensive. In addition, it is generally more difficult to provide adequate evaluative information for complex products. Generally it takes more time and money to implement them. Yet, many of the products we studied were extremely complex, so complex that, in two cases it took our researchers two days to understand exactly the nature of the product.

Complexity need not be a problem if the product is divisible, that is, if components of the product can be adopted without necessarily adopting the whole. And products designed for special client groups need not be a problem if they are modifiable, that is, if the user can easily adapt the product to his or her own particular circumstances. Highly divisible and highly modifiable products yield greater flexibility in use for the practitioner; this quality is a major factor in adoption. Yet the projects which we studied all too often ignored these principles in product development.

A final dissemination-utilization factor pertaining to the producers of research and dissemination products is the motivation to disseminate and secure adoption. By and large, it was evident that most 309 projects had no desire to disseminate their results beyond the boundaries of their own projects. Though funded to produce knowledge that would benefit ABE throughout the United States, they directed their energies toward serving adult participants in their own projects rather than developing knowledge and practices for utilization elsewhere. Their products were designed for in-house use only. These projects, which we termed local impact projects, accounted for fifty of the fifty-nine 309 projects funded in 1972. As a class, local impact projects had no interest in national or even regional dissemination. As a result, little or no dissemination was attempted. The point is fairly obvious: dissemination and utilization will not occur unless the producers of new knowledge are motivated to communicate their results.

THE USER

Thus far I have been speaking of dissemination from the perspective of the developer and communicator of knowledge. Let us now turn to the consumer of knowledge, in this case, the adult education practitioner. First, it is necessary to reemphasize a point. The objective of all dissemination should be the utilization of knowledge. Dissemination for dissemination's sake is a waste of time. Hence, it is vitally important for the disseminator of knowledge to understand and deal with the factors which affect practitioner utilization.

Obviously, some utilization factors are unique to specific user groups. For example, it has been difficult to secure utilization of many ABE innovations in Puerto Rico because of the language barrier. Yet, many utilization factors apply to adult education as a field. In our study of dissemination and utilization in ABE, we surveyed a random sample of 805 ABE directors primarily to investigate utilization factors. The results were rather surprising. We found that the directors' professionalism was the most powerful of all variables considered for explaining program innovativeness and adoption of 309(b) project results. Their professionalism was measured by an index comprised of the amount of time devoted to ABE, the amount of formal training in adult education, activity in professional associations, and centrality of adult education to future career plans. Other important variables were program budget, size, and security. The latter was measured by an index which included success in student recruitment, degree of community awareness of ABE, supportiveness of the parent organization, and the respondent's self-rating of security. The impact of these variables on innovativeness and 309 adoption can be seen in the following results of multiple regression analysis.

Table 3: Summary Table for Multiple Regression: Innovativeness with Budget, Size, Security, and Professionalism

Independent Variable	Multiple Correlation	R Square (Variable)	Simple Correlation	Beta
Budget	.28	.08	.28	.08
Size	.32	.10	.26	.11
Security	.35	.12	.19	.09
Professionalism	.51	.26	.48	.41

(Source: Darkenwald et al., 1974, p. 167)

Table 4: Summary Table for Multiple Regression: 309 Adoption with Budget, Size, Security, and Professionalism

Independent Variable	Multiple Correlation	R Square (Variable)	Simple Correlation	Beta
Budget	.26	.07	.26	.13
Size	.28	.08	.22	.10
Security	.29	.08	.11	.05
Professionalism	.36	.13	.30	.23

(Source: Darkenwald et al., 1974, p. 171)

As previously mentioned, our dependent variables were program innovativeness and adoption of 309(b) products. Innovativeness posed some problems, since there were numerous ways to measure this variable, and non seemed

perfect. As pragmatists, we decided to use three independent measures. One measure related to a respondent's self-assessment of his or her program's innovativeness. The second was an objective index comprised of adoption ratings for seven selected innovations. The third measure involved asking a respondent to nominate the most innovative programs in the state. From this third measure, we identified 111 highly innovative programs, all of which had been nominated at least once. The important point is that the four independent variables -- professionalism, size, budget, and security -- yielded significant correlations with all measures of innovativeness and adoption, with professionalism showing the highest association in all cases.

Taken together, professionalism, size, budget, and program security can be conceived as a measure of a program's capacity to receive and act on new knowledge. Programs of low capacity are poor receivers of new knowledge and practices, and, consequently, are difficult to improve. Conversely, programs of high capacity are excellent receivers of knowledge and new practices. They tend to improve on their own without forced infusions of external assistance.

This conclusion points the direction that dissemination and utilization in our field must take if practice is to improve. The term is "capacity building." In the past, we have spent most of our energies on what is to be poured into the vessel and how it should be poured. But we have ignored the issue of whether or not the vessel can hold the liquid. In comparison to elementary, secondary, and higher education, adult education programs are small, non-professionalized, insecure, and underfunded. To be sure, benefits abound in this situation, for adult educators are relatively flexible, autonomous, dynamic, and perhaps do a better job of responding to learner needs. These assets, however, do not preclude the need for capacity building as an important precondition to improving practice through dissemination and utilization.

Capacity building refers to consolidating small marginal programs into larger, well-funded programs capable of supporting full-time staff. Such consolidation might be accomplished by promoting the concept of consortium and resource-sharing arrangements. Properly constructed,

consortiums might provide the benefits of large-scale organization without incurring the loss of flexibility characteristic of large bureaucracies. Secondly, it is important to encourage professionalism in adult educators by facilitating access to graduate work and by stimulating participation in professional associations. Finally, we must strive toward developing a truer sense of colleagueship, to the end that all educators of adults, regardless of their sub-field, will achieve a career self-identity as adult educators. Once we have reached these objectives associated with capacity building, we will not only have quality dissemination but also will witness a dramatic increase in utilization.

So far this presentation has emphasized the notion that knowledge must have utility for practitioners in order for utilization to occur. The next step is to illustrate the practical implications of that principle by summarizing some of the more important dissemination-utilization problems and suggesting solutions.

(1) In the past, the products of research and development efforts frequently have not been usable by the intended users. Such products have been too expensive and also too costly in terms of the time required and the organizational dislocation involved. Often they have been too narrow in scope or esoteric in content to be relevant to a wide range of users. Simply stated, research and development products have not met the programmatic and organizational needs of the practitioners they were funded to serve. Possible solutions to this problem might be as outlined below.

    First, those with authority to allocate funds for research and development in adult education should weigh dissemination criteria when assessing grant applications. Assessment criteria should at least deal with the following questions:

    - Will the purchase price for the product be within the means of intended users?
    - Has the validity and utility of the product
    - been empirically assessable?
    - Has the project clearly identified its target clientele?
    - Will the product serve a broad range of potential users?

- Have provisions been made to make the product available after project termination?
- Will the product be modifiable and divisible?
- Is there high promise that the product will perform better than the products or practices it will replace?

Secondly, potential users of research and development products should have direct input into the project selection process in order to insure that the products meet user needs. Potential users should be represented on panels which determine priorities and which select proposals for funding.

(2) Once a research and demonstration project has completed its task, funding generally terminates, and the work group moves on to new endeavors. At that point, neither personnel nor funds are available to conduct dissemination and assist with utilization.

The solution to this problem might be to establish permanent dissemination systems which would validate research and development products, store, disseminate, and assist practitioners in implementing them. If this approach proved too costly, institutions which receive grants should be contractually obligated to fulfill the above functions as part of the conditions for receiving a grant.

(3) Dissemination, the process of communicating knowledge, is best accomplished by transmitting knowledge through existing communication networks which potential users already utilize rather than by developing new, parallel networks.

A solution to this problem might be for an agency in each state, such as a university, the state education department, or the permanent dissemination system previously discussed, to conduct a small-scale research project aimed at identifying the channels of communication commonly utilized by potential users of research and dissemination. Once identified, those channels could be used by research and development projects for disseminating information.

(4) Typically, the dissemination efforts of research and development projects have concentrated solely on transmitting awareness-producing information. To solve this problem, research and development projects should be required to prepare replication manuals in addition to or in lieu of final reports. Replication manuals should include the problem the project addressed, how the product was developed, a detailed description of the product or educational process developed, validation and evaluative information, and how to use or replicate the product.

(5) Although much of the knowledge needed to improve practice in adult education already exists, it frequently is not accessible to practitioners for the following reasons:

- The knowledge is based on academic disciplines external to the field of adult education.
- The knowledge is diffuse, that is, it has not been organized into a coherent whole directed towards the problems and concerns of adult educators.
- The knowledge is couched in technical jargon, complex statistics, and abstract concepts.
- The utility of the knowledge has not been demonstrated to pracitioners.

The following suggestions might help solve these problems. First, more synthesizing research should be conducted. In other words, what is known about particular problems endemic to adult education should be identified, organized, and presented in a coherent fashion useful to practitioners. Synthesizing research, then, pertains to the collection and organization of what already is known rather than the generation of new knowledge. Secondly, we need to develop translator roles in adult education.

Translators are professionals who take abstract knowledge, free it of jargon and technicalities and put it into operation for practitioners. Serving as a translator should be a professional obligation of those who have a doctorate

in adult education. It follows that doctoral programs in adult education should prepare their graduates for performing this role.

(6) The only worthy objective of dissemination is to facilitate utilization. Hence, attention must be paid to the capacity of practitioners to adopt new practices and utilize new knowledge. The solution to this problem is to concentrate on capacity-building efforts designed to increase professionalism, program size, and funding, while reducing program insecurity.

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